

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This complete listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server for distributing a content object to a user over a network communication link in response to a user request, said metadata enabled edge server comprising:

a server computer having a processor and a memory coupled to said processor for executing computer program instructions, and at least one input/output port for receiving and sending communications from external entities;

a storage device coupled to said server computer and storing metadata describing content objects accessible to said server computer including at least one location from where a particular one of said content objects is stored and may be directed to said user; and

a controller for distributing said particular one of said content objects to said user using said metadata and for maintaining isochronous delivery of portions of said particular one of said content objects over said network communication link.

2. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said controller includes a request response and a playback procedure executing as software on said metadata enabled edge server.

3. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said network communication link comprises the Internet.

4. (Original) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said network communication link comprises a packet switched communication link not in itself having means for maintaining isochronous delivery of a content item separated into a plurality of packets for communication from said server to said requesting user.

5. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said content objects are internally accessible to said server computer.
6. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said content objects are externally accessible to said server computer.
7. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said storage device stores data selected from the group consisting of: content physical properties; content storage locations; content usage terms; content usage rights; content playback duration; content prefix cache status; content network routing cost information; and combinations thereof.
8. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said metadata also includes a prefix portion of the particular one of said content objects or a low-resolution preview of the particular one of said content objects.
9. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said controller includes a request response and a playback procedure.
10. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said storage device stores at least one content object that is intended to be rendered for presentation at a predetermined time rate.
11. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 10, wherein said at least one content object comprises a video content object having image element frames and audio elements that are intended to be rendered for presentation on a playback device at said predetermined time rate so as to provide substantially the same visual and audio rendering to a viewer when generated.

12. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 11, wherein the amount of data comprising said video content object is greater than the amount of data that is communicated in a packet over a packet switched Internet network.
13. (Currently Amended) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 11, wherein the amount of data comprising said video content object is an amount of video content that when rendered in real-time at an intended playback rate would exceed ~~ten minutes~~ a fraction of time of broadcast quality video.
14. (Cancelled)
15. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 11, wherein said video content object comprises substantially a full-length feature film in a video format.
16. (Original) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said network communication link comprises Internet infrastructure.
17. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said network communication link comprises Internet infrastructure and Internet communication protocols.
18. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said metadata is used to enable intelligent decisions to be made on system operation and content routing.
19. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said metadata contains information about the actual content object including its physical properties, possible locations of the content represented by the metadata, and its usage terms.

20. (Original) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said metadata includes a globally unique identifier describing the content object and at least one location at which said content object may be found.

21. (Previously Presented) A metadata enabled edge server as in claim 1, wherein said content object comprises a video content object having an amount of data requiring a plurality of packets for communication over a packet switched network, and requiring said controller for providing isochronous delivery from said identified content location to a playback device of said requesting user.

22. (Previously Presented) A system for distributing a content object to a user over a network communication link in response to a user request, said system comprising:

- an origin server;

- a plurality of edge servers each coupleable to said origin server over a communications network;

- each said edge server being a metadata enabled edge server including:

- a server computer having a processor and a memory coupled to said processor for executing computer program instructions, and at least one input/output port for receiving and sending communications from external entities;

- a storage device coupled to said server computer and storing metadata describing content objects accessible to said server computer including at least one location from where a particular one of said content objects is stored and may be directed to said user; and

- a controller for distributing said particular one of said content objects to said user using said metadata and for maintaining isochronous delivery of portions of said particular one of said content objects over said communications network.